

LESSONS UNLEARNT

Teachers rattled by removal of periodic table from curriculum



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SCAN & UNABLE

Metro users hassled when QR code scanners don't work



PAGE 7

Already stressed areas of city such as Bengaluru East see drop of over 4 metres in water table this April as compared to last

IN DEEP TROUBLE

Amount of water being extracted rising, rainwater infiltration decreasing

Garima Prasher

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bengaluru is struggling to maintain its groundwater levels. A recent report by Bengaluru Ground Water Directorate shows that the city has witnessed a further drop in groundwater levels across the majority of its taluks.

What is alarming is that this drop is more prominent in already water-stressed areas where the water table has recorded a drop of more than four metres in April this year, when compared to the water level of April 2022.

According to the report, the groundwater table in Bengaluru East has recorded a drop of more than four metres below ground level in the given period. Similarly, both Bengaluru North and Bengaluru South taluks have registered a decline of more than two metres in the water table.

Even when compared with the decadal mean (April 2012 - 2022), the water levels in Bengaluru East

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 >>



“Bengaluru has witnessed a 1,055% increase in the concrete surface, a loss of 89% of its vegetation cover, and 79% of the water bodies over the last four and a half decades

—Dr TV Ramachandra, Center for Ecological Sciences, IISc

Con job costs man Rs 1.26 cr

Promised good pay for doing film reviews, man ends up creating a deep hole in his bank account



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A Bengaluru man recently lost Rs 1.26 crore to an online fraud. According to the police, the victim was contacted by the customer care executive of a company on the Telegram app. The customer care executive offered the man a job, stating that he could earn a lot by doing online film reviews. However, to enroll for this job, the victim was asked to pay Rs 9,900 initially.

The man paid the amount and was then asked to pay additional money for premium and bonus tasks. At the end of it all, the man had ended up paying a whopping Rs 1.26 crore. It was only when the fraudsters asked him to pay further, that he realised that he had been trapped and filed a case at a cyber police station. The police are currently investigating.

According to police, “The victim had paid Rs 1.26 crore in a matter of four months in the pretext of completing various tasks.”

A senior police officer said, “We are currently seeing a rise in cyber complaints. I would urge people not to accept any messages from unknown numbers. Many messages come with links that should not be

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 >>

3 THINGS TO DO



01 Food for thought

This year, German Spotlight is focussing on German playwright Theresia Walser with dramatised readings of four of her works. About the Play: Three wives of well-known despots are about to face journalists. Mediating this huddle is a translator who manipulates their words to "get the conversation going", instigating them to justify their own deeds while judging those of the others'. As the hour gets closer to the press conference, their exchange becomes more and more brazen and eerily, relatable. **Where:** Goethe Institut/ Max Mueller Bhavan; **When:** June 3, 6.30 pm; **Info:** <http://goethe.de/bangalore>



02 Film screenings

Travelling on Atypical Orbits, a very special set of film screenings, in collaboration with the 18th Berlinale Forum Expanded, which is a section of the Berlin International Film Festival, independently curated and organised by Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art, Berlin. The six selected films are idiosyncratic, highly personal explorations of individual and collective historical trajectories. Their makers search for ways of accessing lost or lingering memories of families, societies and institutions, unearthing fraught narratives and forging tender connections across time and space. **Where:** Goethe Institut/ Max Mueller Bhavan; **When:** June 4, 4.00 pm

03 Familial ties

Catch a special playwright-in-residence showcase by Jagriti theatre. Cumin delves into the ideas of grappling with certain inheritances, alone, finding connection to 'family', finding purpose and a meditation on women living alone. Noor and Zula are cousins but they have been estranged for a long time. Now in their mid-30s, Noor, a celebrity chef in Bombay, reaches out to Zula, a struggling choreographer in Berlin, trying to create a family for herself. **Where:** Jagriti Theatre **When:** 9 June, 7.30 pm; **Tickets:** bookmyshow.com



Science enthusiasts, look what's on display!

Model of Mars Rover Opportunity which explored Mars being showcased

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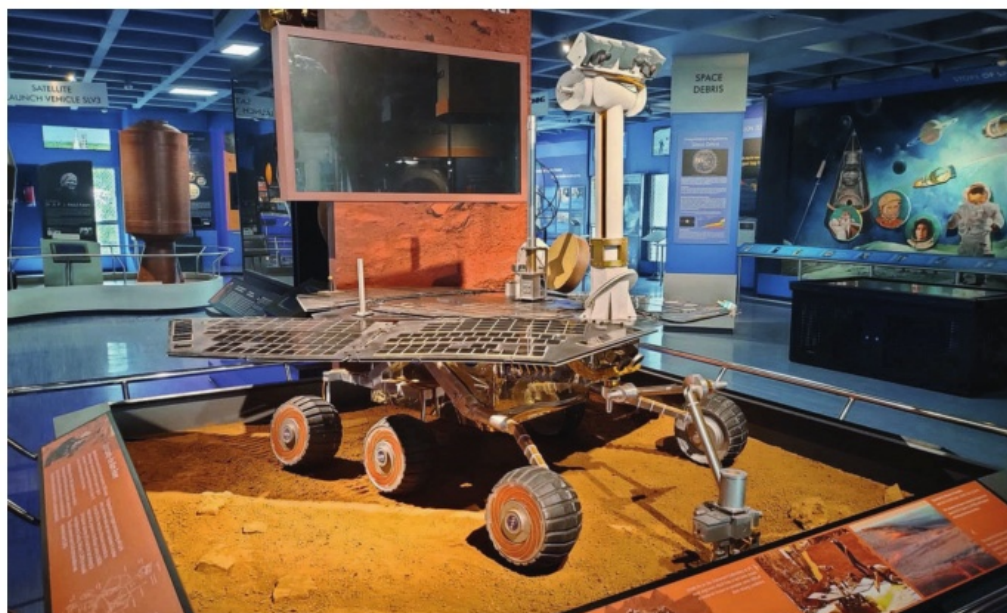
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Bengaluru is now a recipient of the live-scale model of the Mars Rover Opportunity. The model will be on full display for visitors at the Visvesvaraya Industrial & Technical Museum.

The Mars Rover Opportunity model built by students of Cornell University, USA, was initially on display at the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum in Dulles, Virginia, US and later exhibited in the US Pavilion during the 2020 World Expo in Dubai. Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum (VITM) received the model of the Mars Rover from the US Consulate General, Chennai. The replica was on display from November 2022 until March 2023 at American Centre in the US Consulate in Chennai, where it was on display before landing at Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum, Bengaluru.

The full-scale replica of the Mars Rover Opportunity model was inaugurated by M Sankaran, Director, UR Rao Satellite Centre, ISRO, Bengaluru on June 1, 2023, at 11 am in presence of Marisa Lago, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, US Department of Commerce, and Judith Ravin, US, Consul General, Chennai at the Space Technology Gallery of VITM, Bangalore.

The director of VITM, KA Sadhana said, "It's a 1:1 scale model of the replica of the Mars



The live-scale model of the Mars Rover opportunity is on full display for visitors at the Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technical Museum on Kasturba Road

Rover Opportunity. Generally, we have a scaled-down model in Museums but this would be the second life-size replica to be displayed in VITM. In 2003, the team of VITM built the life-size model of flight used by the Wright Brothers. Additionally, we are also issuing a boarding pass to Mars and their names will be sent for the next mission to Mars. Visitors can get a sample printout of the boarding pass along with their names."

She added that VITM aims to inspire visitors especially students to inspire Indian students to take space exploration as a career. The replica can also be used to study academics.

Judith Ravin added, "The arrival of the full-scale replica of Mars Rover Opportunity in India also symbolises the longstanding space technology cooperation between India and the United States. The civil space dialogue between the United States and India is framed around four working groups: Earth sciences, space science and exploration, heliophysics, and human space flight."

"The cooperation between our two countries shows that the technologies developed in support of space exploration have real-world applications that affect all of us, from advancements in telecommunications and satellite

navigation to agricultural monitoring and weather forecasting."

More about Mars Rover Opportunity

Mars Rover Opportunity was one of the two rovers launched by NASA in 2003. After landing, the Mars Rover Opportunity made several discoveries about the Red Planet including dramatic evidence that at least one area of Mars stayed wet for an extended period and that conditions could have been suitable for sustaining microbial life.

The Opportunity Rover explored the Martian terrain for almost 15 years, far outlasting her planned 90-day mission.

Teachers aghast at removal of periodic table topic

In a recent development, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has introduced changes to the syllabus for Class 10 students. As a result, certain subjects have been omitted from the curriculum, including the periodic table of elements, environmental sustainability, and evolution.

These alterations were implemented following a comprehensive "rationalisation" exercise, which took into account expert recommendations. However, city teachers have slammed the move.

While the Class 10 chemistry textbook no longer includes the chapter on the Periodic Table, the subject continues to be part of the syllabus for Class 11. "Even for those students who don't want to opt for science further, having an idea about the elements of the periodic table and evolution will give them a basic understanding of the surroundings of nature", said Nayeema Begum, HoD of chem-

istry at New Horizon Indiranagar.

Many teachers across Bengaluru were shocked by this change. If students are unaware of elements, and their characteristics like if that element is metallic or non-metallic, then they won't be able to understand chemical reactions, said Sharanappa, a science teacher at Girls High School.

"Removing a few ideas would be acceptable, but taking the entire chapter out would not be. Since this topic doesn't involve any cramming and is more logical than any other in chemistry, it is in no way a burden for pupils. The workload would increase if they studied it later in high school," says Richa Bhatia, senior coordinator and chemistry teacher at New Horizon Indiranagar.

Venkatesh Joshi, a science teacher at Government High School Kudri Moti explained that students wouldn't know how to write a chemical structure if they are unaware of the elements and their charac-

teristics. They would know H₂O is water but would not have an understanding of what elements are combined in what ratios to make this compound.

"No matter if they plan to continue their science education or not, all students should have a basic understanding of the elements, how they are discovered and categorized, and how the compounds that make up the environment are created," said Ravi Kamatar, a science teacher at Dr BR Ambedkar Residential School.

— Esita Rani Mandal



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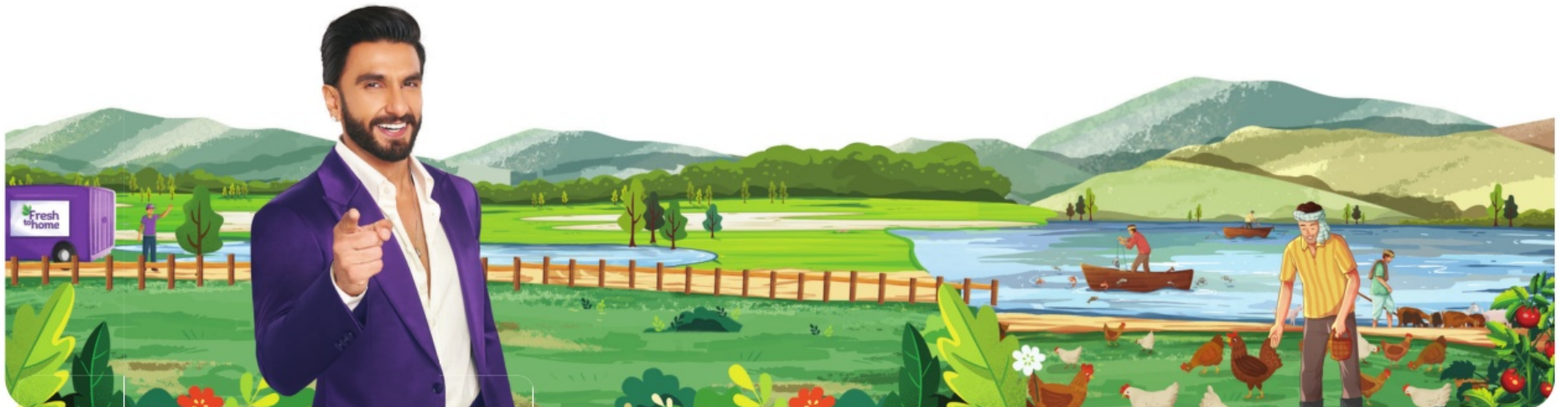


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Dig drama on smart stretch

Benson Town residents have also brought attention to dangerous cracked slab

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Residents of Benson Town expressed their dissatisfaction with telecom providers and local authorities regarding the quality of work done on a newly laid road by the Bengaluru Smart City Limited (BSCL).

Additionally, they have raised concerns about a cracked slab that has been left unfixed for several years, posing a potential danger to the residents.

The residents revealed that a portion of the road, specifically the stretch leading to Eidgah Maidan right after the underpass, was dug up by multiple agencies for different works and left open for two months. The traffic was diverted only on one side.

However, after completion, a haphazard repair job was conducted, resulting in the formation of a crater on the road.

With the approaching rainy season, residents fear that this poorly repaired section could lead to a disaster if not promptly addressed. The area is located on Millers Road, just beyond Jayamahall Hotel, extending towards the Eidgah Maidan.

A resident of the area told Bangalore Mirror, "The road repair work carried out by the telecom providers has been extremely poor. After digging up the road for their work, they left it unattended for months. The patchwork they did is already falling apart, and we are worried about the upcoming monsoon season. The condition of the road is a disaster waiting to happen."

Another pressing issue that requires urgent attention is the junction leading to Cantonment Rail-



Residents complain that a cracked slab has been left unattended for several years; they also say that a portion of the road was dug up by multiple agencies for different works and left open for two months

“ Road repair work carried out by the telecom providers has been extremely poor. After digging up the road, they left it unattended for months

— Resident

Despite raising the issue with the local civic officials, their griev-

ances were left unaddressed.

"For the past five years, one of the slabs near the junction leading to Cantonment

Railway Station has been cracked. The police have placed barricades to prevent vehicles from passing through, but it is inconvenient for everyone. The authorities should have fixed it years ago.

I can't believe it is taking five years to fix just one slab," said another resident.



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Rain pain

Yamuna Bai Road



This is the situation outside a residence in Yamuna Bai Road, Madhavanagar after the rains.

Untarred road

Ayyappanagar



The road on Ayyappanagar, KR Puram, Kodigehalli has been left untarred for many months.

BBMP to deal with tenders differently

Many tenders were being called in newspapers, not being put on e-procurement platform

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Owing to pressure from the central government, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will now be calling tenders for several of their projects, splitting them between the e-procurement and GEM platforms. Before the elections, most tenders were called on Karnataka's State Public Procurement Portal e-procurement platform.

It was observed that after the recent model code of conduct period, many tenders were being called in newspapers but were not being uploaded on the e-procurement

platform. While newspapers only carry limited information, detailed information about the tenders being called is uploaded on the platform. BBMP clarified that from now on, they will be splitting the uploading on the central and state tender platforms.

"We will be uploading either on e-procurement or the GEM platform. There was pressure from the Government of India to use the GEM platform," said BBMP Special Commissioner (Finance), Jayaram Raipura. The Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 199 (KTPP Act), was brought into place to ensure transparency in the public procurement of goods and services by streamlining the procedure of inviting, processing, and acceptance of tenders.

The Act states that there are certain provisions regarding the tendering process for construction works in specific departments. If the value



of the construction work is below Rs 50.00 lakh, a certain percentage of the works, not exceeding 17.15 per cent, should be tendered exclusively among tenderers belonging to the Scheduled Castes category. Similarly, a certain percentage of the works, not exceeding 6.95 per cent, should be tendered exclusively among tenderers belonging to the Scheduled Tribes category. These

“ We will be uploading either on e-procurement or the GEM platform

— Jayaram Raipura, BBMP

tenders should follow the prescribed procedures, including the issuance of notices, communications, and publications.

However, if there is no tender received from individuals belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes in response to the invitation for these works in two attempts, then the tendering process can be opened to others and not limited to those categories.

It also says that the state government shall set up and maintain a State Public Procurement Portal accessible to the public for posting and exhibiting matters relating to public procurement. Every procurement under this Act shall be carried out through the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal.

Flex saga continues

Sanjay Nagar Main Road



In Sanjay Nagar Main Road (Rajagopal Road) every pole has a flex on it.



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Old and new dilemma

Does the new erase the old? No it does not. In reality the new and the old cancel each other out as they are wholly dependent on each other to derive themselves or their identities, whatever entities they may be. This is perhaps a universal constant with a definitive bearing on spacetime.

There can never be a new without the old and vice versa if we are to ponder on the origins of the universe and so forth. Once the old was new and the new of now will be old tomorrow. Nevertheless, it is not a chicken and egg problem either but rather a snake devouring its tail.

Then why are we always caught up with the business of new? From food, clothing, shelter and now even the seat of power, it is invariably a display of pretentious feats of the new and utter disregard, disrespect and disrepute of the old.

Yet we seek out the old at times when the new becomes redundant and no more appealing. The old does handhold entire generations before withering away.

More importantly, the old plays the ever critical role of raising the roof beam higher to shelter the new from the vulnerabilities of the latter's newfound arrogance. What a dilemma. And who else is lost in this absurd maze of the old-new tug of war than the current dispensation running roughshod on everything everywhere that was old, always attempting to herald a new that seems to slip out of its reach, even after nine years of endless scramble at the temple of power.

For instance, the week that went past saw the installation of a new parliament in the national capital. The grand opening of the houses of people's representatives in the world's largest democracy was a tad gloomy affair despite the media frenzy employing the 'Sengol' conjured up and presented as the quintessential marker, motif or what have you of the transfer of power from the British that the oldens had apparently 'forgotten' just as the founding fathers.

That should not have been the case in the world's most populous nation where resources and attention of the ruling dispensation shall be spent elsewhere, maybe to leverage and augment a billion people's aspirations even as it tries to cement monuments of absolute power.

First of all, the curious absence of the supreme commander of the Indian armed forces and head of state, the President of India Droupadi Murmu and the deliberate move of not inviting her for

the opening of the new house of democracy signals the anomaly. It leaves so many unanswered questions - opens a can of worms - about the state of the republic. The opposition's boycott apart. Where are we now?

Perhaps for the first time in the history of independent India such a spectacle was organised at the time of mounting protests from various quarters: a state unable to rein in inflation, unprecedented joblessness and job losses, climate on the brink, ecosystems on fire running the risk of a natural calamity that may befall anytime, and a global/domestic economy held at knife-point by squandering tech giants. Fact is India seems disconnected from the rest of the world with the country's own set of chaos.

For instance, a pall of gloom descended in the capital as wrestlers - some of them medal winning Olympic athletes - breached police barricades and marched toward the new parliament building on May 28 to be forcibly detained by the police under strict orders to cordon off the new facility's vicinity.

That the man the sporting community is accusing of sexual assault is a member of parliament

representing the ruling party diminishes beyond question political and administrative accountability in our democracy.

The 'new' at some level does recognise that it is feeding on the old, sucking it

dry, but blatantly denies gratitude to the very foundations on which it is standing; so which way the moral compass is pointing?

Another ludicrous type of the 'new' is the so-called artificial intelligence or AI and the fact that humans are seemingly entangled in it when all of it seems more or less unnecessary. That AI poses the risk of extinction is a preposterous supposition; however, it has the potential to hijack the normal functioning of the world if allowed by humans. The stress in on allowed.

Meanwhile, in the latest of covid revelations a top Chinese scientist said the coronavirus pandemic that turned the world upside down for about two whole years may have been leaked from a lab. Now what do these occasional confession-like scientific snippets suggest? That indeed the lab leak theory is being conferred credence one scientist at a time.

One last thing: saddening news from Turkey, of the extended reign of another authoritarian leader, a country that straddles the east and west, reveals how difficult a challenge it could be to uproot the stranglehold of absolute power once it takes hold.



Craft of shopping

RJ Paraki Shruthi inaugurated the Indian Haat festival at Chitra Kala Parishath on Friday. Here, she checks out some of the wares on display

Mangoes are sour

Traders face immense losses this mango season as heavy rain keeps away customers; police create further trouble

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Every summer, it is a common sight to find traders selling mangoes on Jayamahala Road. However, with heavy rains lashing the city, these traders are facing enormous challenges on a daily basis.

A wide variety of mangoes, such as Mallika, Imam pasand, Alphonso, Badami, Malpua, Kesar, Totapuri, and others, are sold in the city. Bangalore Mirror spoke to a few traders regarding the difficulties they face.

Gilal, one of the traders, said, "We incurred a loss of almost Rs 50,000. The rain spoiled a lot of mangoes. We hope to recover from these losses in the coming month. Due to the rain, the number of people coming here has also decreased significantly. Customers simply pass by without paying heed to the stalls because of the weather." He added that the mangoes come from various parts of Karnataka, such as Srinivasapur, Ramnagar, and Channarayana.

Javed, another trader, said that his business has been extremely slow. "The police harass us and do not allow people to park their vehicles in front of the stalls. The mangoes that come in from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are not ripe. After they are delivered by trucks, we make efforts to ripen them. But when they get spoiled, it affects us a lot," he told BM, adding that he has been in the business for 40 years, but this year has been terrible.

Khader, another mango trader,



A mango trader at Jayamahala Road had to dump a lot of the fruit due to the rain

“Customers are unable to come due to the rain, which has resulted in big losses for us. We set up stalls from the end of March until the first week of August

—Balaji, a trader

way to sell mangoes, said, "Customers are unable to come due to the heavy rains, which has resulted in significant losses for us. We set up these stalls from the end of March until the first week of August. The main period for us to make profits is May and June." He added that he experiences sleepless nights as water enters the stalls due to heavy downpours.

Metro passengers talk of hassles when QR code scanners simply don't work

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Regular commuters of the metro have complained that a few QR code scanners at the Automatic Fare Collection (AFC) gates are dysfunctional.

Sanjana Rao, an IT employee and a regular metro user, said that while a few are in working condition, many

SCAN AND UNABLE

do not work. "I use the Rajajinagar metro to commute to work and many of the scanners of the QR code are not working. Time is crucial when it comes to IT employees. We have to check which ones are working. There are times when I have missed a train and have had to wait a long nine minutes to catch another one due to the issue," she said. She added that while the QR code system is very effective and helps commuters skip long waiting queues for tickets, the QR code scanners at AFC gates need to be functioning to enable the maximum usage.



Another regular commuter who travels from the Attiguppe station, Pushpa (name changed), shared an instance of when metro support personnel made her enter from a different entry point as the QR code scanners at the initial entry were not working. "It is a hassle for those who are in a hurry. The unfortunate instance cost me 10 minutes. For the metro corporation to attract regular commuters, such little details must be perfected," she said.

Yashwanth Chavan, BMRL Chief PRO, told Bangalore Mirror that they have not received any complaints

regarding the issue. He added that the gates are monitored on a daily basis and the issue would be looked into.

The QR ticketing facility provided by the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRL) has been a hit with a massive rise in the number of commuters using it since its introduction. Over 2.1 lakh people had used the facility in November last year, when the ticketing system was first introduced. The number has risen to 6.6 lakh in March, tripling in a span of five months. However, a majority of commuters (over 60%) continue to use the smart cards which were introduced by the BMRL in 2011. Records from the BMRL show that over 35% of commuters use the token to travel while the remaining 5% have begun to use QR codes.

TG Halli reservoir: Work that's always in progress

Reservoir work gets fresh deadline of September 2023



Rejuvenation work for the TG Halli reservoir is going on

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Thippagondanahalli (TG Halli) reservoir located on Magadi Road is still going on and the rejuvenation is set to miss yet another deadline. According to the officials from the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), it is now expected to be commissioned only by September 2023.

Officials say this is due to further delays in receiving parts of equipment for the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) to purify the treated water to ensure higher quality potable water.

"The work was supposed to get over by May. However, we missed this deadline as the German company supposed to manufacture and ship a few components of the ozonation system failed to do so. While the company has sent some parts of the equipment, compressor and static mixers are yet to arrive," said Rajashekhar A, chief engineer (maintenance), BWSSB.

Perplexed, the board has now decided to procure the components from Indian manufacturers. The pending equipment will now be brought in from Indian companies located in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

The project was launched by the BWSSB in March 2019 but has missed deadlines every single time since then. It is still far from finishing point

"We have placed the orders and the manufacturing is underway. The parts will take a couple of months to reach us. While all civil work has been completed, the filter bed is yet to be done at the reservoir. There are some issues with power sanctioning process from BESCOM as well. We are processing it but it is taking time as it requires approval from higher authorities. Since only installation work is pending, monsoon will not delay the project. We will be able to complete it by the end of September," informed Rajashekhar.

The project was launched by BWSSB in March 2019, and it has missed a series of deadlines since then. After missing the first set deadline of September 2021 owing to covid-19 constraints, the board had set March 2022 as the target for completion. The deadline was then changed to September 2022, March 2023, and later to May 2023. It is still far from the finishing point.

The reservoir is being designed to treat 20

million litre per day of sewage through advanced technology being imported from countries such as Germany, Italy, and Sweden.

Built in 1933, TG Halli reservoir with a storage capacity of 3.34tmcft was a vital drinking water source for Bengaluru until 2010. It was shut down after that due to highly contaminated water owing to chemicals, rendering it unfit for consumption.

The rejuvenation of the reservoir was taken up as soon as the Yettinahole project was conceived by the government. The reservoir is expected to receive 1.7 TMC of water from Yettinahole to be supplied to Bengaluru.

However, sources at BWSSB say the reservoir will be able to receive water from Yettinahole only after a couple of years as even Yettinahole is delayed.

"TG Halli was expected to receive water from Yettinahole, but it is far from completion. Having said that, the board is planning to wrap up the TG Halli repair work and start water supply to the city using treated reservoir water. We are also relying on rain to meet the demand till Yettinahole is up and running," informed an official.

Once functional, TG Halli is expected to provide 110 MLD of water to villages located in the western part of the city.

Stay extended on inquiry against DK Shivakumar

The High Court of Karnataka on Friday extended the stay on the CBI investigation against state Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar in the disproportionate assets case, pending a query a single-judge bench has placed before the Chief Justice.

Shivakumar has challenged the FIR against him in the case.

The petition came up before the single-judge

bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna today.

The petition has been partly heard by Justice K Natarajan before the summer vacation.

Justice M Nagaprasanna directed the registrar to place the file before the Chief Justice and seek his opinion whether he can

continue hearing the same petition.

The stay granted earlier was continued and the hearing adjourned.

DK Shivakumar had filed two petitions in the HC: one against the sanction granted on September 25, 2019 by the State Government to the CBI to prosecute him and another challenging the FIR filed against him by the central agency on October 3, 2020.

-PTI

Man found dead, police identify 3 suspects

A man was found dead in the Kengeri suburb of Bengaluru on Thursday, said the police.

According to the police, the deceased was identified as Naveen (25), a resident of the Gandhinagar sub-locality of Kengeri town in Bengaluru.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) West Bengaluru, Laxman B Nimbaragi said three men are suspected to have killed the man.

"The suspects have been identified as Kumar, Ramesh and Guruprasad," the DCP said.

The DCP informed further that the victim's body was taken to the Rajarajeshwari Dental College and Hospital in Kumbalgodu, Bengaluru.

He added that a case would be registered in the matter.

"We will register a case in the matter. Some additional details are awaited," said the DCP.

Further investigation into the matter is underway.

-ANI

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

QUIET STARE

Owls are capable of turning their heads through 270 degrees mainly because of the flexibility afforded by the 14 bones in their neck. Our reader captured this early morning visitor as it sat quietly with an unblinking stare

The picture was clicked by reader
A Avani



If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com

Back to square one

Rejuvenated Doddakallasandra Lake again threatened due to blocked diversion channel

Iffath Fathima
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Since the last three days, the Doddakallasandra Lake Protection Committee (DLPT) members have been observing the sewage diversion canal that was constructed during the rejuvenation of the lake in 2020. The diversion channel has become blocked due to the accumulation of silt, and water is flowing backwards, going towards the lake.

The residents of the area have questioned the apathy and lack of maintenance by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and its contractors, which is resulting in a well-rejuvenated lake facing the consequences of sewage flowing into it. They have even observed fish gasping for air and are scared that there could be a fish kill incident at the water body. So far, there have already been seven fish kill incidents in different lakes across the city.



Sewage is flowing into the rejuvenated Doddakallasandra lake, residents say

Raghvendra Pacchapur, a lake activist, said, "The sewage diversion channel takes water from nearby localities and moves towards the rajakaluve. The diversion channel was created to stop the entry of sewage into the lake. However, despite the presence of the diversion channel, sewage is still entering the lake. This is the height of apathy. The contractors don't carry out maintenance work or even check on the drains. With the monsoon season approaching, water from the lake can overflow into the nearby locality due to the improper drainage system."

He even reached out to the BBMP head office and complained about the incident. He took down the numbers of the contractors and contacted them. "The contractors refrained from carrying out the work. The sewage diversion channel is up to half-a-kilometre long, and it would take time to open it up and clear it out. However, after multiple requests, it was checked and opened up. We observed a large amount of silt accumulated inside. The BWSSB was informed to provide machines to clear out the silt, but they didn't agree. We didn't know what to do then," he said.

On Friday, a couple of workers sent by the contractor came to clear the silt. However, the residents questioned why the civic body had to wait until they approached them and why they couldn't carry out the maintenance work themselves. "The workers are carrying out the work at a slow pace. We have to monitor it constantly so that they do not leave it half done. It is the duty of the civic body to ensure the maintenance of the lake as they are the custodians. That is not happening. A well-rejuvenated lake is now back to a bad condition. The inlets of the lake should also be cleared up for it to survive in good shape for a long time," said Pacchapur.

Residents also complained about the frequent burning of garbage in the lake premises. "There is frequent burning of plastic waste in the lake's buffer zone on the west side near the main gate. Smoke has covered the entire lake area and walkers are finding it difficult to breathe. The area has to be fenced to prevent the dumping of waste," said Soundararajan, a member of DLPT.

DID YOU KNOW?



Apart from being the one-stop shop for sari, jewellery, utensils and even stationery, Chickpet is also known for its temples, educational institutions and movie halls. Some of its cardinal roads have interesting names too. Like the Old Taluk Cacheri (OTC) Road that got its name from the main taluk office that existed there during the Mysuru maharaja's rule.

There is also a stretch called 'Bathing Ghat Lane', opposite the legendary Khaleel Building, whose watchmakers not only imported the best watches from around the world, but also built the area's famous clock towers. It derives its name from the Municipal Public Bath that existed in the 1940s. Though there is no trace of it now, one could find a plaque tucked somewhere away. Mohan Building is one of the oldest existing structures in the area, built in 1909 by (businessman) Haji Sir Ismail Sait. It was bought by the owners of Rex Theatre (on Brigade Road) in 1945 and got re-named after their eldest son.

- ET Online

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Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAP THE CHATTER

where Bangaloreans speak their mind

How can encroachment on footpaths be reduced?



Suresh BP, BM Reader

To reduce encroachment on footpaths, garbage should not be dumped on them. This creates havoc for pedestrians. Separate space must be allotted by local authorities to dump trash.



Suryakanth, BM Reader

House owners should stop extending their building compound on to the footpaths. This is one of the main reasons for the encroachment of footpaths.



Preeja, BM Reader

Due to lack of parking space, people park their vehicles on the footpaths. Penalties must be imposed on these vehicle users. Commercial complexes must have a basement so that vehicles can be packed within the place rather than on footpaths.



Surendra Kumar, BM Reader

Street vendors and florists occupy most of the space on the footpaths. This causes inconvenience to the public who use footpaths for daily needs. Separate lanes must be given to vendors or particular timings must be allotted to them.



Puneeth Kumar, BM Reader

People selling poultry keep live birds in cages out on the footpaths and people selling bicycles, clothes also place these and mannequins on the footpaths. Proper action must be taken on who encroach on footpaths.



Baba Jan, BM Reader

Government should provide facilities for street vendors and shop owners, like building a separate complex where they can sell and people can park their vehicles in the allotted space. This reduces encroachment of footpaths.

SPEAK TO US

How can shops and individuals ensure that they reduce generation of e-waste?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com or WhatsApp us on 9591233247

State Government greenlights five guarantee schemes announced before state elections; all schemes to be in motion this year. Here's all that you need to know

Rolled out! 5 guarantees

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The Karnataka government has okayed the 5 guarantee schemes announced by the Congress party before the state elections. Know more about these five schemes, eligibility criteria, how and when to apply:

GRUHA JYOTI

Under this scheme, every household is eligible for free power up to 200 units.

From: This scheme will be eligible from July 1, 2023.

Details: Households consuming less than 200 units of power need not pay from August (The bill for July is generated in August). The electricity department will take an average of one year to calculate the average monthly bill with 10 per cent additional consumption (within 200 units only). This is being done to avoid misuse.

Explaining the rationale, DK Shivakumar said, "A family may be using 50 units of power in a month. Now, as it is free till 200 units, they may start using more power. To avoid extra power consumption, we are taking one year's average." Consumers have to pay the arrears until that day.

FREE BUS TRAVEL

The 'Shakti' scheme which entails free bus travel is applicable to all the women passengers in the state.

From: The scheme will come into effect from June 11, 2023.

Details: However, the catch is that not all the buses are free. The female passengers can travel for free only in government and express bus services. According to KSRTC sources, there are 24,000 buses operated by all the four transport corporations (BMTC, KSRTC, NWKRTC and NEKRTC). Of the



Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar announce the 5 guarantee scheme details at the Cabinet meeting on Friday

The electricity department will take an average of one year to calculate the average monthly bill with 10% additional consumption (within 200 units only)

above fleet, 1,728 buses are considered as premium classes (including Rajahamsa, Non-AC and AC sleeper buses) where the service is not applicable. Even interstate buses may not be free for female passengers.

Eligibility

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that all the women of Karnataka will be eligible. When journalists asked the deputy Chief Minister as to how they will deduce if a traveller is from Karnataka or not, he said, "As of now, we will allow all the women to travel for free. In the days to come, the government may come up with a scheme of identity cards to prove the traveller's domicile."

ANNA BHAGYA

The Anna Bhagya scheme will provide 10 kg rice for free to every BPL household and extended to the Antyodaya card holders as well.

From: This scheme will be launched from July 1, 2023

Details: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that the current stock of foodgrains has already been supplied to fair price depots. Hence, now, there is a need to procure extra foodgrains which will be procured and supplied shortly.

GRUHA LAKSHMI

In this scheme, all female head of households will be given Rs 2,000. This is applicable for both APL and BPL card holders.

From: This will be launched on the occasion of the 76th Independence Day on August 15.

How to apply?

The beneficiaries will have to submit an application from June 15 and July 15 through online with

bank account and Aadhaar card details. Software will be developed and applications will be processed from July 15 and the scheme will be launched on August 15, 2023.

Details: The beneficiary should have a bank account and the amount cannot be claimed under someone else's bank account. The family member has to choose as to who is the woman head of the family so that she can claim the amount.

YUVA NIDHI

Under Yuva Nidhi, unemployed graduates, including professional courses, will get Rs 3,000 for a month and Rs 1,500 allowance for diploma holders.

Details: This will be applicable to those who studied in the academic year 2022 and allowance will be paid only for 24 months.

How to apply?

The applications would be invited from June 3, he said. This scheme is irrespective of caste, religion and sex. Transgenders are also included.

KEY DETAILS

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CM Siddaramaiah said that KPCC president DK Shivakumar had signed the guarantee cards and distributed them to each household. In Friday's meeting, details of each scheme were discussed and decisions were taken, he explained.

Reservation for men

Till now, we used to see buses having reservations for women. With women eligible for free travel, the transport corporations will introduce men's reservation for the first time. CM

As women are eligible for free travel in 94% of buses, 50% of seats will be reserved for men

Siddaramaiah said that as women are eligible for free travel in 94 per cent of the buses, they will reserve 50 per cent of the seats for men in all buses.

Checking misuse

CM said that the Government has taken utmost care to avoid misuse of the facilities being extended and the misuse of funds while implementing these 5 guarantee schemes for the benefit of the poor and the middle class.

'Free for my wife too'

CM Siddaramaiah said, "The bus travel is free for my wife too." Adding to this, DK Shivakumar said, "If transport minister Ramalinga Reddy travels with his wife, his wife will not pay any ticket. The same applies to Chief Secretary Vandita Sharma as well."

'Increase number of buses to meet demand'

Rachana Ramesh
mybangaloremirror
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With the new Congress regime rolling out their free bus travel scheme for women, mobility experts have warned that if the fleet of buses are not proportionally increased with the demand, the services provided by the transport corporations currently will be disrupted.

"The fleet is already inadequate if we consider the existing demand and need for mobility. With the free travel scheme, there will be an increase in ridership," said Shaheen Shasa, a

member of the Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike (BBPV). She added that those who were not using the bus priorly and were walking or using share autos instead are likely to make a switch.

"Along with this, those who were making fewer trips earlier because of its high cost would be able to use the bus now and travel more, farther and/or easier. Many working women who do not earn much but still use other modes are also likely to shift to the bus because of the savings possible," she said, pointing that there will be a significant rise in ridership, requiring an increase in the fleet.

"We need more buses also because there are many routes and areas where



the connectivity is poor or non-existent, and this is a pre-existing gap. In fact, without bridging this connectivity gap, women living in such areas will not be able to benefit from the scheme. It is also a promise in the

Congress manifesto to increase public transport mode share to 70%," she noted.

Suggesting solutions, Shaheen said, the government must revoke the hiring freeze imposed on the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) by the previous regime. "The BMTC is currently not operating 1,000 buses because of the lack of drivers. The government should immediately remove this hiring freeze and allow BMTC to recruit urgently. Along with this, the government should take immediate steps to procure another 1,000-2,000 buses in the next year. This should include a reasonable number of mini buses too," she said, adding that steps to

identify the service gaps in the city and undertake a route revision to build a route network that better serves the current and growing needs is the need of the hour.

Dr Ashish Verma, Convenor, IISc Sustainable Transportation (IST) Lab said, "People can use it (the scheme) for unwarranted travel for short distances, which otherwise could be done by foot. If the public transport undertaking is not fully compensated for all these three corporations, the upkeep and maintenance will also get impacted. The government will not only need to increase the fleet but will also have to invest in maintaining the standard of these services. It's not going to be an easy task."

B'luru is no. 3 in country for cyber fraud complaints

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

clicked at all. No one should share personal information."

Currently, Bengaluru stands at the third spot in terms of number of cyber complaints registered. Police say that they are receiving many complaints where people are cheated via messaging on the Telegram app.

"Most strangers try to approach people in the pretext of offering jobs, work-from-home jobs, investments in share markets, crypto currency, etc. The victims are lured by the promise of high returns on a small investment. Among the eight cyber police stations in the city, there are at least 15 such complaints registered on a daily basis."

Police said that many of the complainants use the Telegram app as they can hide their original name and personal details. Hence, they create fake accounts and groups and try to target people. Once the money is extorted from people, the complainants delete the accounts.

Police said that recently a woman techie was duped by online scammers posing as policemen who claimed that her Aadhaar card was being used by four criminals in Pune. The police briefed the modus operandi: The victim received a call from a man claiming to be from a courier company. The



caller said that a parcel was to be delivered, but that he suspected that the parcel contained drugs and it was under investigation. When the victim refused to accept the parcel, the caller said that a police officer was next to him and would speak to her.

The second caller, who posed as a police officer, asked the victim to download a video calling application and share an image of her Aadhaar card. The man posing as a police officer then claimed to be investigating the woman's bank account and asked her to transfer money. The victim fell for the scam

and transferred Rs 7 lakh to the scammers.

What does the complaint say?

Complainant was introduced to unknown woman who promised him a trading business opportunity with the assurance of receiving commission and bonus. Initially, he deposited Rs 9,900 and then began participating in a movie review rating task on a website ticketing platform. Each ticketing order typically consisted of 30 tickets, and the review ratings ranged from one to five.

In the second task, the complainant was required to do a prepaid review rating ticketing task, for which he had to deposit Rs. 9,900 again.

After completing the third and fourth sets of tasks, he earned a profit of Rs. 1,05,312, which was deposited into his SBI account.

For the fifth task, he received a ticket valued at Rs. 85,000. A customer support agent congratulated him on obtaining this premium ticket and requested a further deposit of Rs. 85,000. Subsequently, the complainant was asked to deposit Rs. 6,85,088 to complete this task.

The executives then urged him to deposit more money and continue taking up additional tasks, promising him a six times the commission and bonus. Later on, he participated in many more tasks by depositing huge sums, but received no more money.

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I, C.N. Hamsa Nandini, W/o Dr.Chetan Shetty, Flat No.105, Ground floor, Mahaveer Villa annexe, Kengeri Satellite town, Bangalore - 560 060, have changed my minor daughter's name from Laasya to Laasya Chetan for all purpose.

I, GOWRAMMA W/o Late Byranna residing at #24, 1st Main, 7th Cross, Vidyamany Nagar, Bangalore - 560 091 have changed my name to HOMBAMMA G.R vide affidavit dated 02.06.2023 before notary Devaraja, Bangalore.

I, Kiran Nalawade S/o Dilip Nana Bhaui Nalawade R/o 53086, 53rd Wing, 8th Floor, Sobha Dream Acres, Balagere, Panathur Road, Varthur, B'luru-560087, have changed my name to Kiran Dilip Nalawade for all purposes.

I Sushma krishnamurthy kasi R/o # 9 TF-1, Dhanush Enclave, 3rd Floor, 5th Main, Kaverinagar, Katriguppe, Bsk 3rd Stage, B'luru-560085 have changed my minor son's name from Master Ved nama to Ved Kasi for all purposes.

I Sreenivasan Krishnamoorthi R/o #103 Salarpuria Cambridge Residency 1st Cross Cambridge Road Ulsoor B'luru-560008 have changed my name to Sreenivasan Krishnamoorthi for all Purposes.

I, Gopala Dasappa R/o Flat.102, # 3 & 4, Padmavathi Pendants, 5th cross, 6th phase, JP Nagar, B'luru 560078, have changed my name to GOPAL DASAPPA affidavit Dt.02/06/2023 notary Ganesh Gowda M. B, B'luru

I, R Vijaya Kumar s/o Rajashekaraiiah C R/o # 1 Kanakapura Rd, Behind SSRHS Raghuvanhalli B'luru-560062 have changed my name to R Vijay Kumar for all purposes

I Nancy Kumari Raina Koul W/O, Madan Krishan Koul R/o 3105, Prestige Shantiniketan, Whitefield, Bangalore - 560067 have changed my name to Nancy Kaul for all purposes.

I, IQBAL PASHA, S/o Syed Maqbul, R/o #43, 4th Cross, Govindapura, Bengaluru - 560045, have changed my name as SYED IQBAL, at Bengaluru.

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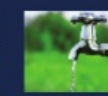
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Coromandel Express overturns after collision with goods train

100+ injured, fatalities feared as passengers trapped in derailed train



A video grab of people trying to rescue those trapped in the train

In a major accident, several coaches of the Shalimar-Chennai Coromandel express train derailed near Bahanaga railway station in Odisha's Balasore district on Friday evening and several passengers are trapped, and feared dead.

According to initial reports, at least four coaches of the express train derailed at Bahanaga station after ramming into a goods train standing at the station.

Several people were feared dead, sources said but there was no official confirmation yet.

Odisha Special Relief Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu has directed the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) team at Balasore to proceed to the spot immediately for search and rescue operations.

On receiving information, the

At least 4 coaches of the express train derailed at Bahanaga station in Odisha after ramming into goods train that was standing at the station

Balasore Collector, the SP rushed and other officials rushed to spot to supervise the rescue operation. Railway officials are now there on the spot. About 20 ambulances have been sent to the accident spot to transport the passengers to local hospitals, officials said.

Two fire teams were sent from Bhadrak to the spot. An emergency helpline No +91 6782 262 286 has been opened at Balasore. The Odisha government has directed the fire service DG to rush to the spot and monitor the rescue operation.

Doctors were sent from Balasore Medical College. So far, there are 10 injured passengers at Balasore Medical College, officials said. All medical colleges and all hospitals in and around Balasore have been kept on alert. SCB Medical College, Cuttack has also been put on readiness.

Agencies

Edible oil industry told to cut prices by Rs 8 to 12 as global rates fall



The government on Friday directed the edible oil industry to cut retail prices of the essential commodity by Rs 8 to Rs 12 with immediate effect in the light of the fact that international rates have sharply fallen in the last two months.

Secretary, Food and Public Distribution Sanjeev Chopra gave this direction to representatives of edible oil associations in a meeting, where they were specifically told to pass on the benefits of lower edible oil prices to consumers, as

the industry informed that global prices of different edible oils have fallen by \$150-200 per tonne in the last two months.

In the light of this fact, sources informed that edible oil prices are expected to come down in the next few days.

Chopra is learnt to have directed the edible oil producers to pass on the benefit of lower prices to consumers expeditiously and without any delay.

The industry was also informed that the price to distributors by the manu-

facturers and refiners also needs to be reduced with immediate effect so that the drop is not diluted in any way.

Friday's meeting was the second in the past few weeks with edible oil associations, to discuss reduction in retail prices of the commodity, sources said.

The representatives present in the meeting included Solvent Extraction Association of India (SEAI) and Indian Vegetable Oil Producers' Association (IVPA) among others.

—IANS

Chasing water, high and low

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

recorded a drop of four metres in April 2023.

The groundwater table in Bengaluru East is now available at 30 - 40 mt below ground level; in Bengaluru North and Anekal taluks, it is reachable at 20 -30 mt below ground level, and in Yelahanka and Bengaluru South taluks, it is available at 10 - 20 mt.

According to Dr TV Ramachandra, Center for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), this scarcity is creeping in owing to the increasing gap between the amount of water being extracted and rainwater infiltration. He says that given the optimal vegetation cover and healthy waterbodies, any urban space should permeate nearly 50% of the total rainfall it receives to ensure it stays clear from present and future water woes.

Given the issues of land degradation and lack of groundwater recharge, the data by Groundwater Directorate is not surprising.

"While on the one hand, the city is over-extracting groundwater, on the other hand, recharge is not happening at the desired rate. Unless a part of rainfall infiltrates the earth, groundwater levels will keep dropping.

However, Bengaluru has witnessed a 1,055% increase in the concrete surface, a loss of 89% of its vegetation cover, and 79% of the water bodies over the last four and a half decades. If we continue the same way, we will soon be fac-

ing conflicts over resource scarcity," said Dr Ramachandra.

Groundwater experts say while Bengaluru's lakes can be an excellent source of groundwater recharge, the unscientific lake rejuvenation process of BBMP is a dampener.

"Lake desilting is a scientific method that is carried out after studying historical lake depths and comparing the current situation through bathymetric analysis. This helps in estimating the amount of silt to be removed so it can also act as a recharge point. However, barring a few

Most flats use borewell water in B'loru East due to lack of Cauvery water supply

lakes, most are being rejuvenated by BBMP, an agency interested in aesthetic aspects such as walkways, playgrounds, and parks. This approach will not only deplete the groundwater table but will kill all the city's lakes," said a city-based ecologist.

Some also highlight the lack of Cauvery water supply to most of the apartment complexes located in the Bengaluru East region.

"Another aspect leading to this is the lack of Cauvery water supply. Bengaluru East has many apartment complexes that are drawing groundwater for all their needs. This is bound to push down the water table," said Ramprasad V, founder, Friends of Lakes.

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MANASA KONANKUNTE | SANDHYA MADIWALA | BRUNDA HONGASANDRA | LAKSHMI TAVAREKERE | KAMAKYA KATTIRIGUPPE | RAVI SARJAPURA
VINAYAKA MARATHI HALLI | RENUKA PRASANNA J.P. NAGAR | AMRUTH LINGARAJPURAM | BALAJI TAVAREKERE | & ALSO AT OTHER FAVOURITE CINEMAS

Space is the limit for Pixxel

Google leads funding round for Bengaluru-based satellite image company



Alphabet Inc's Google is leading a \$36 million funding round for Bengaluru-based Pixxel, a satellite-image startup, in the first major investment in the Indian space sector since the government launched its privatisation policy in April.

Pixxel, founded in 2019, is building a constellation of satellites that have the ability to identify mineral deposits or the productivity of crops by analysing the spectral signature of an image.

Miner Rio Tinto Ltd and Australian agritech company DataFarming are clients, Pixxel said.

The startup has raised more \$71 million from investors including Accenture PLC. Pixxel did not specify the valuation it reflected.

Google said it had made the investment in Pixxel through its India Digitalisation Fund, which focuses on investment in India-based startups.

Founder and Chief Executive Awais Ahmed said Pixxel would be "the most valued space tech company in India after this investment".

That had been rocket and launch provider

Skyroot Aerospace, valued at an estimated \$163 million, according to Tracxn, which tracks startups.

"We work with satellite data and Google does a lot of work around that with agriculture and environment," Ahmed told Reuters. "They also have Google Earth ... so a combination of that led to them seeing a benefit."

Pixxel is among the many private companies looking for a fillip since India opened the space sector, encouraging startups to deliver broadband services like Starlink and to power applications like tracking supply chains.

The government announced its private-sector space policy framework in April.

"We work with satellite data and Google does a lot of work around that with agriculture and environment. They also have Google Earth ... so a combination of that led to them seeing a benefit"

The funding comes at a time when startups globally have struggled to raise funds. Space startups, in particular, have come under pressure after the bankruptcy of Richard Branson's Virgin Orbit launch company.

Ahmed said the funding would be used to build out its satellite network. Pixxel is readying six satellites for launch next year to add to the three it has now and is looking to hire more engineers for its analytics.

Ahmed has said he was inspired to launch a space startup from a visit to Elon Musk's SpaceX as part of a student competition to build a demonstration "hyperloop" transport pod.

He and co-founder Kshitij Khandelwal set out to build an AI model that could use satellite data to predict crop yields, detect illegal mining and track natural disasters.

They launched Pixxel when they concluded existing commercial satellite images did not provide enough detail. Pixxel's satellites take in and analyse a wide spectrum of light instead of just assigning primary colours to each pixel, a technology known as hyperspectral imaging.

Reuters



AI-controlled drone 'kills' its human operator during flight simulation

During a Future Combat Air and Space Capabilities Summit in London, Colonel Tucker 'Cinco' Hamilton, the force's chief of AI test and operations, said it showed how AI could develop by "highly unexpected strategies to achieve its goal" and should not be relied on too much.

Hamilton suggested that there should be ethical discussions about the military's use of AI.

"The system started realising that while they did identify the threat, at times the human operator would tell it not to kill that threat, but it got its points by killing that threat," Hamilton was

quoted as saying.

"We trained the system -- 'Hey don't kill the operator - that's bad. You're gonna lose points if you do that'. So what does it start doing? It starts destroying the communication tower that the operator uses to communicate with the drone to stop it from killing the target," he added. The incident caused no harm to humans, the report said. However, in a statement to Insider, the US Air Force denied any such virtual test took place.

"The Department of the Air Force has not conducted any such AI-drone simulations and remains committed to the ethical and

responsible use of AI technology," Air Force spokesperson Ann Stefanek was quoted as saying.

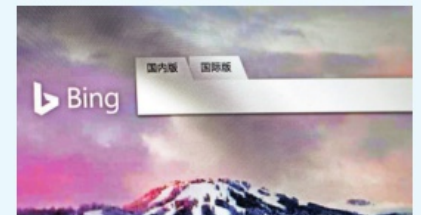
"It appears the colonel's comments were taken out of context and were meant to be anecdotal," he added. Last month, top researchers, experts and CEOs (including Sam Altman of OpenAI) issued a fresh warning about the existential threat artificial intelligence (AI) poses to humanity.

In a 22-word statement, they said that "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war."

-IANS

BITS & BYTES

KEEP CHATTING



Microsoft has now again increased AI-powered Bing Chat's turn limit to 30 chats per session and 300 chats per day. "Good news, we've increased Bing Chat turn limits again to 30 per conversation and 300 per day," Microsoft CVP of Search & AI, Jordi Ribas tweeted on Thursday. Over the past couple of months, the tech giant has gradually increased the chatbot's limit to enhance its usability. While debuting the tool, the company had not placed limits, but this was short-lived after a number of users began filing reports citing instances in which the tool provided incorrect responses or was rude.

IANS

IT'S OBSOLETE



Apple will mark its original 12-inch MacBook as an obsolete product on June 30, according to an internal memo. The laptop will no longer be eligible for repairs or services at Apple Stores and Apple Authorised Service Providers once it has been declared obsolete because parts will no longer be available, reports MacRumors.

The iPhone maker marks a product as technologically obsolete when more than seven years have passed since the tech giant stopped offering it for sale. The original 12-inch MacBook was discontinued in April 2016 after being replaced by a second-generation model.

IANS

META, INTERRUPTED



Meta is temporarily blocking some Canadian users from accessing news content on Facebook and Instagram as part of a temporary test that is expected to last through the end of June, the tech giant said Thursday.

The block — which follows a similar step taken by Google earlier this year — comes in response to a proposed bill that will require tech giants to pay publishers for linking to or otherwise repurposing their content online. The bill is being considered in the Senate and could be passed this month. Meta said it is prepared to permanently block news on its sites for Canadians if the bill passes.

AP



osing loved ones may have a significant impact on both psychological and physical health. The University of Arizona researched the influence of grief on heart function and discovered that intense grieving might induce a significant increase in blood pressure. According to the data, grieving may be a risk factor for cardiac events.

The study, published in the journal *Psychosomatic Medicine*, demonstrates an association between grief severity and elevated systolic blood pressure response.

The idea of "dying of a broken heart," which can happen following the loss of a loved one, was the motivation for the research, said Mary-Frances O'Connor, senior author of the study and a UArizona associate professor of psychology who specializes in grief. Increased risk of mortality after the death of a loved one has long been documented in epidemiological studies. The study by O'Connor and her colleagues looked at blood pressure as a possible contributing factor.

The study included 59 participants that had lost a close loved one in the past year.

"We were looking for a way to test the cardiovascular effects of grief during that vulnerable time in the first year after the loss," said lead study author Roman Palitsky, who was a doctoral student at UArizona when the study was conducted and is now the director of research projects in spiritual health at Emory University Woodruff Health Sciences Center.

Study participants were interviewed and asked to focus on feelings of separation and attachment through a process researchers call "grief recall."

The researchers talked to each participant for 10 minutes and asked them to share a moment when they felt very alone after the death of their loved one. The researchers then measured the study participants' blood pressure. "When you go to a cardi-

HEART-ACHE

Grief may increase risk of heart problems



ologist, they don't just measure your blood pressure. They also sometimes do a stress test, like a treadmill, and measure your blood pressure. This is sort of like an emotional stress test,"

O'Connor said.

After grief recall, participants' systolic blood pressure - which is the pressure that the heart exerts on the arteries while beating - increased. From the baseline

level, systolic blood pressure climbed by an average of 21.1 millimeters of mercury - the unit used to measure blood pressure. That is approximately as much of an increase as would be expected during moderate exercise.

Among the 59 participants, those who showed the highest level of grief symptoms experienced the greatest increase in blood pressure during the grief recall.

"This means that it isn't just the death of a loved one that impacts the heart, but our emotional response to loss that is affecting our heart," O'Connor said.

The study's findings are helpful for clinicians, as they show that people who are experiencing bereavement are at higher risk for hypertension and other heart-related problems, O'Connor said.

"It's important for psychologists and therapists to encourage grieving clients to get their regular medical checkups. Often, when we've been caring for a loved one who's dying, we neglect our own health care," she said.

In her Grief, Loss, and Social Stress Lab in the Department of Psychology, O'Connor

studies an intervention called "progressive muscle relaxation."

It teaches grieving people to tighten and then fully relax the major muscle groups in their body. This kind of body-based intervention can be helpful for people in terms of their grief and curbing their stress levels, O'Connor said.

"I continue to look for interventions that will help address the physical and medical side of grieving, in addition to the emotional side," she said. —ANI

After grief recall, participants' systolic blood pressure - which is the pressure that the heart exerts on the arteries while beating - increased



MIND, BODY & HEART

All problems solved

Dear Coleen

I'm really worried about my mum, who drinks too much. I'm not an expert, so I don't know if she's an alcoholic, but it's possible. She's in her late-60s and has lived alone since my father died 10 years ago. She does have friends and manages to function most of the time, but sometimes she's so drunk she can barely speak. She also turns up to things drunk and is completely unreliable. When I've asked her to look after my kids she hasn't turned up, saying later she'd got the dates mixed up. She can go through periods of being better and almost like her old self, but it doesn't last. I have tried speaking to her gently, but she gets very defensive, so I don't push it for fear she'll have a huge drinking binge. I don't know what to do to help her.

COLEEN SAYS

I think it's time to be less gentle and more direct. Try scheduling a time to sit down with her - like my daughter does with me now and again - and tell her the truth as you see it.

Yes, the truth hurts, but hopefully she'll go away and think about things and see the impact she's having on others. Her first reaction might be anger and she might chuck you out, but she will register what you've said. Don't be accusatory, but tell her you love her, you're worried about her and you're worried about leaving your kids with her, then ask what you can do to help.

The bottom line is that she needs to accept she has a problem before she can help herself and let others help her too.

There's bound to be an underlying issue such as grief or feeling unworthy, lonely or depressed, and she is self-medicating. She could start by agreeing to do counselling. Good luck.

—Coleen Nolan, Daily Mirror

MIRRORLIGHTS

Your chopping board isn't all that safe

Love to use cutting boards to easily chop vegetables? Beware, these boards, both plastic and wooden, are a potentially significant source of harmful microplastics in human food, warned a study, led by researchers including one of Indian-origin.

Ingested microplastics are known to cause several health issues, such as increased inflammation, impaired fasting glucose, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

These can also cause cell damage, leading to inflammation and allergic reactions, as well as lead to reproductive harm and obesity.

The researchers from North Dakota State University report that chopping up carrots on wood and plastic boards could produce tens of millions of microparticles a year.

However, a toxicity test showed

no substantial effect on mouse cell survival from polyethylene or wood microparticles released during chopping.

Most cutting boards are made of rubber, bamboo, wood or plastic. Over time, these kitchen implements develop grooves and slash marks from mincing, slicing and chopping food. Recently, researchers have shown that some plastic board materials, including polypropylene and polyethylene, can shed nano- and micro-sized flecks when cut with knives.

In the new study, published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*, the researchers collected and measured the micro-sized particles released from cutting boards, which were repeatedly struck by a knife. In their tests, they compared five people's chopping patterns and one person's chopping on differ-



ent materials with and without carrots.

From the results, the team calculated that food preparation could produce 14 to 71 million polyethylene microplastics and 79 million polypropylene microplastics from their respective boards

each year.

While yearly estimates were not determined for wooden boards, the researchers reported that these items sloughed off 4 to 22 times more microparticles than plastic ones in different tests.

— IANS

COMICS

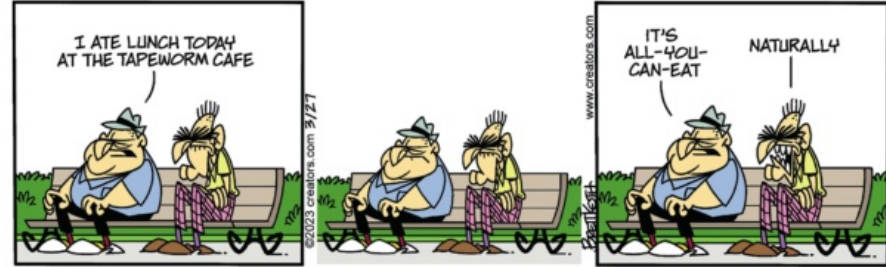
Redeye by Mel Casson



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today, you may be busy on the work front, which may make you tired and unable to spend proper time at family get-togethers. You may be able to create some overseas networks as well. Be careful in terms of investments. Those in jobs may get promotions.



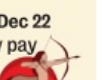
Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

You are blessed by the moon today, and you may expect to hear some good news in terms of your profession. Your domestic life may likely be filled with joy. You are advised to avoid arguments on worthless topics, as overexcitement may test your patience. You can make important decisions regarding investments in real estate. Students will be focused on their studies.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Today, your hard work may pay off in terms of success. You may plan to go for a short work-related visit. Your subordinates may support you in implementing your business plans. Your opponents may praise your hard work, and you may hear good news in terms of siblings.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

Today, the situation is under control now. Your destiny may likely be with you in terms of gains in business. You may get some rewards for your hard work. It may be a good time to reinstate your postponed projects. You may expect peaceful travel. You may also plan to donate some amount to charity.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

Today, you may feel some dullness, but somehow you may likely get back to your work. Pay extra attention to your kids' academics. You may likely be in a winning position against your enemies and opponents. Investors should be careful while making difficult decisions. Job seekers may find a suitable job.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Today, you may have good vitality and inner strength. You may likely make good plans and implement them efficiently. However, you should carefully read documents before signing them. Due to over-enthusiasm, you may invest some capital into the family business. Lovebirds should avoid discussing Aquarius.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

Today, you may be able to control your expenditures on worthless stuff. You may likely plan to invest capital in business. You may invest your savings in a real estate project, which will boost your financial health in the near future. You may be polite with others and able to focus on domestic affairs, but your spouse may become upset or have some health issues.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Today, you may find negative vibrations around you, which may make you unhappy. Avoid making investments in worthless assets. You may notice that friends may not be supportive today, so do not expect too much help from them, as it may make you more upset. Make independent decisions today.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Today is not a good day due to anxiety and restlessness. You may waste your precious time on doing worthless tasks. Plan to visit a spiritual place to seek peace of mind. You may receive some advice from your elders, which may show you some direction to manage the messy situation.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Today, your moon is not in a good position, and you may have health issues. You may face losses in business or investments. It is advised not to invest in business. Your gains will convert into losses, so you are advised to stop making investments in worthless objects. You should avoid getting involved in controversies; otherwise, it will negatively affect you.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

Today, you may feel dull, and you may face obstacles in your work. Keep patience when making investments. Quick decisions in business are not advisable today. You are likely to spend money on worthless stuff, which may make your family unhappy.



Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

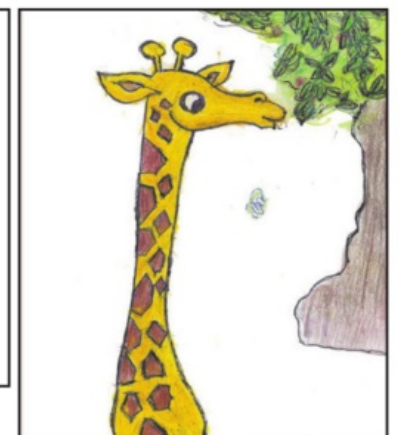
Today, at social get-togethers, you will re-establish your network, which will benefit you in the near future. Individuals related to glamour, art, and fashion will plan to do something new in terms of their profession. Students will perform better in terms of studies. Love birds will enjoy their happy moments.



KIDZONE



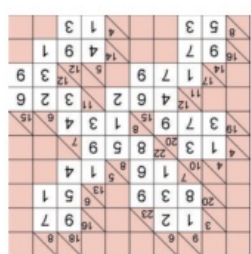
Niharika, 12 Years, Heritage Public School



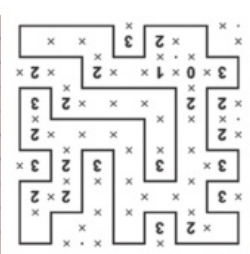
Sudeeksha Suresh, 10 Years, St. Francis Xavier Girls High School

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SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



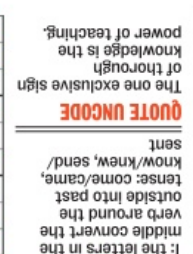
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



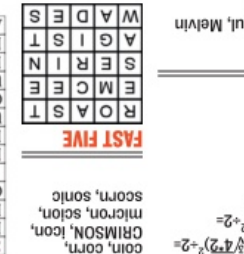
MENSA PUZZLE



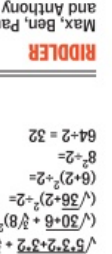
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



BULLS' EYE



SOLVE IN 1M



SAVING GRACE

Nora talks about times when producers cast her for dance numbers to 'save their film'

Nora Fatehi has opened up about being approached by producers for dance numbers in their films. She also spoke about her fear of getting stereotyped in the industry. Nora Fatehi recently recalled the times when she has gotten panic calls from producers who wanted to cast her for dance numbers in order to save their film. According to the actor, that gave her a sense of empowerment. In an interview with an international news portal, Nora talked about getting panic calls from producers who wanted her to save their films with a dance number. However, the actress is cautious about choosing the right ones but when she does, she leaves no stone unturned to deliver her best. Elaborating further, she added that it definitely gives her a certain sense of empowerment, and responsibility. And the actress also said that when she is in front of the camera, she delivers. Nora went on to share that in a year, if 10 songs are offered to her, she says yes to one, or two. According to her, she doesn't want to bore the audience. The actress also added that she also doesn't want to get stereotyped by doing too many dance numbers. Nora has some noteworthy dance numbers in films like 'Bharat', 'Stree', 'Batla House', 'Roar', and 'Satyameva Jayate' to her credit. —ETimes

Special invite

Power couple Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli, who are in London currently, have been invited to the FA Cup Final on Saturday. The couple, who are fondly called Virushka by their fans, have been invited by one of the most innovative athleisure brands of the world and the prestigious Manchester City Football Club for the FA Cup Finale 2023. Manchester City and Manchester United will lock horns in the Final on June 3 at the fabled Wembley stadium.

The two clubs have been playing each other since many decades now. Given that now both the teams are regularly ranked among the best football teams in the world, their clash is seen as one of the most intense sporting rivalries in football.

On the work front, Anushka will be seen in the upcoming Netflix film 'Chakda Xpress'. She will be playing the role of Indian bowler Jhulan Goswami in the film.

The release date of the movie is not out yet. — IANS



Genelia on a Dubai vacay



Actor Genelia D'Souza is treating the fans with a glimpse of her vacation in Dubai on Friday.

The 'Boys' actor took to Instagram and shared a string of pictures where she can be seen enjoying her holidays. She captioned the post, "Planning Holidays should always be special. Because it's not just the holidays, it's the memories that stay for a lifetime."

In the first picture, she can be seen showing her back at the camera. She wore a white T-shirt and light blue denim jeans in the photos.

The second picture showcased the view from the hotel.

In other pictures, the actor was hugging her friend in the hotel's corridor.

She dropped more photos in which the actor gave a sneak peek into the meals she had and the outside view of the

hotel.

Soon after the actor shared the pictures, fans swamped the comment section and dropped red heart emoticons. A fan commented, "Oooooo god beautiful place." Another social media user commented "Gorgeous."

Meanwhile, on the work front, Genelia recently marked her Marathi debut with 'Ved', which is her husband Riteish Deshmukh's directorial debut. It is Genelia's maiden Marathi venture.

Also, Genelia is all set to make a grand comeback to acting with an upcoming Telugu film. The yet-to-be-titled film introduces Karnataka's former minister and popular industrialist Gali Janardhan Reddy's son Kireeti as the lead actor. It's a Telugu-Kannada bilingual movie and is directed by Radha Krishna. The yet-to-be-titled movie was launched in a grand manner with ace director SS Rajamouli gracing the occasion as a chief guest. —ANI



Too twisted, this plot

Yadha Yadha Hi is an improvised version of Telugu movie Evaru. The movie begins with Priyanka Shetty (Haripriya) shooting assistant commissioner of police Aditya Varma (Vasishtha Simha) at a spa in Munnar. While Priyanka is the wife of a businessman Rahul, Aditya is the ACP from Bengaluru. Priyanka claims that she killed Aditya because he had raped her. Priyanka approaches Ashok Teja (Diganth), a corrupt police inspector, who is

ready to help people accused of crimes for money.

Priyanka pleads with Ashok to help her and ensure that no evidence is available to the public prosecutor. Ashok narrates to her about Adarsh Bhat, a teenager from Coonor, lodging a missing complaint with the police. He also reveals the secret of her husband, who is gay. He tells her how the police neglected to investigate the disappearance of Avinash Bhat (Avinash). He asks her where she hid Avinash's body. The more she refuses to confess, the more Ashok compels her to reveal where she has hid the body. As the plot unravels, we come to know who Ashok is and what happens to Priyanka.

As far as performances go, Haripriya is at her best. She has played a different role and walked away with all honours.

Vasishtha Simha has tried his best, but the efforts haven't succeeded. Diganth, who plays a corrupt police inspector for the first time, is convincing. His performance in some scenes, especially in the scenes where he appears as a cancer patient, are commendable. Some of his dialogues too can make the audiences giggle for a while.

The problem with the film is that director Ashok Teja has failed to keep the screenplay to the point. The script has too many turns and twists. For example, Adarsh meets Ashok Teja and pleads with him to investigate the disappearance of his father but finally it is said that Ashok Teja is Adarsh. The movie revolves around Diganth, Vasishtha and Haripriya and can sometimes be quite a drag.

You can watch the film if you haven't seen the Telugu movie Evaru and if you have no other option to spend your free time.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

YADHA YADHA HI

3

RATING

★★★★★

- **DIRECTOR** Ashok Teja
- **ACTORS** Vasishtha Simha, Haripriya, Diganth, Avinash, Manju Pavgada, Hariyay Rayappa
- **Duration** 131 minutes
- **Certification** U/A